



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, February 14, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most networks led with reports on the PyeongChang Olympics. TV Asahi gave top play to the heavy snowfall in the Hokuriku region.

INTERNATIONAL

Director of national intelligence says North Korea will continue provocations

NHK reported this morning that Director of National Intelligence Coats testified at a congressional hearing on Tuesday that he expects that North Korea will continue its provocations and that it will be difficult to negotiate with the North on denuclearization. He was quoted as saying: "In the wake of its ICBM test last year, we expect to see North Korea press ahead with additional missile tests this year. Pyongyang has repeatedly stated that it does not intend to negotiate its nuclear weapons and missiles away." Coats also reportedly said that the "decision time" on how to address this issue is nearing, and that although the U.S. goal is to resolve the issue peacefully through maximized pressure, it could become a vital issue for the U.S.

The network added that CIA Director Pompeo pointed out at the same hearing that Kim Yo Jong, who recently visited South Korea, is a senior member of North Korea's propaganda unit. Pompeo stressed that one should not be deceived by the mood of reconciliation between the South and the North, saying that North Korea's nuclear and missile development strategies have not changed.

- [Japan confident U.S. stance on N. Korea unchanged after Pence remark](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan tops poll of countries most supportive of Taiwan after quake](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan, S. Korea politicians agree to seek denuclearized N. Korea](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: New NPR contributes to security of Japanese nation](#) (Sankei)

- [Japan gov't launches emergency email system for citizens in South Korea](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Ousted Thai leaders leave Japan for Hong Kong](#) (Jiji)

SECURITY

- [Japan fails to protect its territory](#) (Sentaku)
- [Chinese, Russian hackers use AI](#) (Sankei)
- [U.S. Marines in Okinawa swell to record number](#) (Akahata)

ECONOMY

Japan's GDP grows for eighth consecutive quarter

NHK reported this morning on the announcement by the Cabinet Office that Japan's GDP from October to December 2017 grew 0.1% from the previous quarter, increasing only slightly from the previous year at an annualized rate of 0.5%. This marks the eighth consecutive quarter of expansion, the longest period of growth in 28 years and 9 months. The network reported on its website that consumer spending grew 0.5% from the previous quarter, marking the first increase in two quarters due to the strong restaurant industry and brisk auto sales. The network also said that capital investment rose 0.7%.

- [Tougher rules for cryptocurrencies urged to guard investors](#) (The Japan News)
- [Coincheck resumes yen withdrawals after cryptocurrency theft](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Some of Coincheck's stolen cryptocurrency might have gone to Russian exchange](#) (Mainichi)
- [Part of Coincheck's stolen currency likely changed to other currencies](#) (Kyodo News)
- [LDP official takes issue with "low" target ratio for renewable energy](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [New chief of Japan's leading business lobby vows to beat deflation](#) (Kyodo News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 13, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of interpellations at Lower House Budget Committee, Feb. 13](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Gov't says relative child poverty rate improved](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

OPINION POLLS

NHK poll: 46% support Abe cabinet

NHK reported on Tuesday evening on the results of its opinion survey conducted over the weekend, which showed that 46% of respondents expressed support for the Abe cabinet while 34%, down 3 points from last month, expressed disapproval. On PM Abe's attendance at the opening ceremony of the PyeongChang Olympics, 63% expressed support, while 30% did not. Concerning the premier's meeting with ROK President Moon, during which he called for a thorough implementation of the Japan-ROK agreement on the comfort women, 72% expressed support, while 18% did not.

- [46% support Abe cabinet, 34% do not, NHK public opinion poll](#) (NHK online)

- [61% say stronger regulation of cryptocurrency exchanges needed, NHK public opinion poll](#) (NHK online)
- [Cabinet and political party support rates, NHK public opinion poll](#) (NHK online)
- [32% say Abe is most appropriate to serve as next LDP president, Yomiuri poll](#) (Yomiuri)

SOCIETY

- [Supreme Court to hold hearing in March on return of a child related to Hague treaty](#) (Nikkei)
 - [Japan saw record number of refugee applicants in 2017, Justice Ministry says](#) (The Japan Times)
 - [More illegal immigrants put back in detention after release in Japan](#) (Kyodo News)
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